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ABSTRACT

The results of a study of the postsecondary plans and educational attitudes of black high school students are presented in this report. A review of the literature found that, after centuries of social barriers to education, the number of blacks who graduated from high school and attended college began to increase dramatically in the 1960s. When the economy weakened in the mid-70s, the gains by blacks became harder to discern. While blacks continue to have high educational aspirations, the effects of a weak economy--and the ensuing Federal budget cuts--could have a negative impact on their ability to attain these aspirations. The study focused on questions related to postsecondary plans, financing college education, and valuing education. They were asked of black students at two predominantly black urban schools, one an "honor" school, in the same city. Major findings were that, if black students come from supportive family backgrounds, regardless of parents' highest level of education and occupation, they can aspire to high educational attainments. Although the students' attitudes are highly dependent on family support, educational environment, and family income, overall they do value education. Consequently, they should be encouraged to pursue postsecondary education despite proposed financial aid reductions and eliminations. A 75-item reference list is appended. (KH)

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AN ANALYSIS OF BLACK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' POSTSECONDARY PLANS: EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE OR ECONOMIC SURVIVAL?

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INTRODUCTION

The historical educational boundaries for blacks have always been difficult to breakthrough and overcome. Despite the general view that education was unnecessary for blacks (Billington, 1961; Bond, 1934; Du Bois, 1953; Newby and Tyack, 1971; Sowell, 1972; Weinberg, 1979; Woodson, 1933), throughout the centuries, black parents struggled for the right to educate their children. To blacks, education was more important and essential for them than for whites. Their black ancestral slaves had viewed education as a good investment. Education was the impetus for hard work to become a part of society. Parenthetically, education had been that vehicle for overcoming socioeconomical barriers in a society where social injustice prevailed (Ashmore, 1954; Ogbu, 1978; Woodson, 1933).

Historically, blacks had encouraged blacks to seek to become with education. The need for a "good education" was endorsed and transmitted within black culture. It meant having an "American Express" for obtaining jobs, providing for families, receiving personal growth and respect, and gaining equity. Most importantly, an education spelled freedom, especially to black slaves (Franklin, 1956; Woodson, 1919).

LITERATURE REVIEW

If one were to briefly examine historical reports of how black slaves had been denied the right to learn, it is easy to conclude that education for blacks was the core for their human existence in America (Astin, 1982; Du Bois, 1953; Franklin, 1956). During the 1700 and 1800, the political

system supported the concept that blacks had no purpose for an education. Many southern states protected this ideology by establishing compulsory ignorance laws. Such laws prohibited teaching blacks to read and write. To enforce such laws, severe penalities were invoked. Eventually, the exclusion of black children from public school education led black parents to secretly use sabbath and private schools to educate their children (Bullock, 1967; Synder, 1933; Washington and Du Bois, 1907; Weinberg, 1979). Although these educational efforts were later destroyed by white mob groups, blacks continued to seek ways for an education.

Finally, blacks gregariously pooled their resources and petitioned public authorities to provide schooling for young blacks. As a result, several private schools were established in primarily northern states (Bond, 1934; Weinberg, 1979; Wilkerson, 1939). Whereas, blacks perceived the schools as a right for an education, whites felt the schools were a privilege given to blacks. Overall, however, most state governments still refused to legislate a compulsory law to educate blacks. Yet, black parents continued the educational struggles for all black children. This persistence led to opening common schools for blacks during the 1820s and 1830s (Du Bois, 1901; Woodson, 1919).

When blacks refused to be pacified with segregated common schools that were not equal with white schools, discriminatory practices were attacked. Not only were blacks denied attending white schools, but blacks were denied a fair distribution of public funds to support their schools as well. Moreover, black parents had paid tax dollars; yet, their children were deprived of quality education (Harris, 1904; Woodson, 1933). What was more immoral was the law failed to legally protect blacks' rights. In several

cases (Chalmers v Stewart, Lewis v. Henley et al.,Van Camp v Board of Education of Logan), state supreme courts denied blacks the moral opportunity to educate black children (Weinberg, 1977). Subsequently, the laws justified the discriminatory rulings by consistently reminding blacks that they were inferior, and they were unable to learn and appreciate an education (Catterall, 1936; Woodson, 1919). Weinberg (1979) had this observation:

> For many generations, most blacks had been denied schooling by the dominant society, by masters in the slave society, or by public authority in the society of free Negroes in the North and South. Those for whom the doors of schools had been open had to rely on the benevolence of private charity or their own intensive efforts. Negroes had to struggle constantly for the right to learn, for the right to be taught in an equal and nonsegregated setting. The conspiracy to keep them in ignorance was pervasive. Most ironic of all, free Negroes were expected to pay taxes for schools they could not attend. Still, they hungered for learning and strove to achieve it in the face of a slavery that survived even in freedom. The claim of whites that Negroes were intellectually incapable of learning was refuted by the desperate attempt of whites to deny them schooling. Whites seemed to fear not that Negroes could not learn but they would (p. 39).

The pattern of limited education for blacks continue to exist two centuries later. The distorted image of a democratic nation continued to prevail, especially after World War II. Racial tension emerged to plague the forties. Blacks could have an education, but only under segregated conditions. Reforms in education throughout this era did not improve the educational opportunities for blacks. Black children were frequently educated in dilapidated school buildings that were overcrowded. Moreover, school facilities were inadequate, and black per student expenditure was extremely low, compared to that of whites. W.E.B. Du Bois (1946) noted:

> The majority of Negro children in the United States, from 6 to 18, do not have the opportunity to learn to read and write. We know this is true in the county districts of Mississippi, Louisiana and a half dozen other southern states. But even in the towns and cities of the South, the Negro schools are so crowded and ill-equipped that no thorough teaching is possible.

Parallel to the forties, education during the fifties was the axle for solving previous social, economical, and political problems. Inequality cases were heard in the U. S. Supreme Court. Such cases as Sweatt (1950), McLaurin (1950, and Gray (1952) mirrored America's image of creating and maintaining a stratified system with undemocratic values (Miller, 1966; Weinberg, 1977). This interwoven discriminatory image was further reflected with the 1954 decision case of Brown v Board of Education of Topeka (Fellman, 1972). When the Court handed down a unanimous decision, Chief Justice Earl Warren concluded that "separate but equal" had no place. Therefore, separate educational facilities did not mean educational equality (Friedman, 1969; Miller, 1966; Toppin, 1973).

The plight of education in America plunged into a new era of hope during the sixties. The "Great Society" was to eradicate previous decades of prescribed social injustice. More social reform movements emerged to foster social change and quality. The intense penetration of the Civil Rights Movement and Poor People March-on-Washington forced America to unveil her social and democratic values to all citizens. The highlight of this decade was the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights of 1965. With the signing of these two bills, blacks were given more optimism that they could attain educational, social, economical, and political mobility in America. As a result, during the 1960s aspirations for blacks grew and educational goals were pursued more than any other time in history. The federal government interceded to promote social justice for everyone, and every sector in society was expected to reform and conform. Federal monies were channeled into educational and social institutions to assist the poor and disadvantaged in getting a start in life to have a part of the "American Dream". America had reclaimed her commitment to afford everyone with equal

opportunities to achieve and succeed.

After more than two centuries of blacks' struggles to remove the social barriers to education, the sixties and mid-seventies represented the turning points for black Americans. "To get a good job; get a good education" was pronounced to achieve and succeed. With projected promises, the federal government vowed to increase educational opportunities for minorities and low-income families. When federal policies and programs were developed to facilitate the access to higher education, several significant educational and socioeconomical trends emerged.

One significant trend was observed as a growing number of black students arrived on college campuses. For the first time in history, more blacks, other minorities, and low-income students were not only graduating from high schools, but they were pursuing postsecondary education as well. Between 1965 and 1970, the college participation rates for blacks increased from what was seen in previous decades. The increased rate changes showed a 24.6 percent change with black high school enrollment and a 90.5 percent change with black college enrollment (Bureau of Census, 1980). Other statistical reports showed that freshmen black students in college increased from 5 percent in 1966 to 8.7 percent in 1972. Although black college enrollment declined in 1974 (7.4 percent), by 1975 the percent of black high school graduates who enrolled in college was proportionally the same as that for whites (English and Settle, 1976; U. S. Dept. of Ed., 1983). Similar findings were reported also in 1976. More than one million black students were enrolled in colleges and universities (Bureau of Census,1980; U. S. Dept. of Ed.,1983).

Another significant change was observed with socioeconomical gains made by blacks. The belief was the more education one had, the likelihood for acquiring and enjoying the fruits of life (Broom & Selznick, 1975; Havinghurst & Neugarten, 1975). Economically, this belief particularly held true for blacks during the prolific years of the 60s. As education became that principal route for upper and middle-class occupational positions with high wages, socioeconomical attainments enabled minorities and low-income people to experience upward mobility. Not only did blacks' participation rate in the labor force increase, but income earnings increased as well (Featherman and Hauser, 1976).

Other socioeconomical changes were reflected in declining numbers of poor people. The percentage number of poor people declined sharply from 22 percent to 12 percent of the total population during this era of mobility (U. S. Bureau of Census, 1980). The magnitude of legislative federal policiies gave blacks more equal access to upward socioeconomic mobility. Statistical reports also showed that the number of black families at the poverty level declined sharply from 56 percent to 32 percent between 1959-1969 (Bureau of Census, 1980).

All these upward mobility indicators were purportedly showing progress for blacks until the nation's economy began to weaken by the mid-70s. Then previous gains by blacks were hardly visible during an era of historical high levels of unemployment and inflation (Barker & McCorry; Farley, 1977). Recessional economic indicators of the 1970 era began to take a greater toll on blacks than on the national economy. While the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s had accelerated many gains for blacks, an acute analysis of the recession mirrored a regression era for blacks. As a result, a series of identifiable regression factors crystalized foreseeable desparities.

First of all, when assessments of blacks' educational and socio-economical attainments were measured, the progress was proportionally lower on the socioeconomic scale than that of whites. In essence, blacks were still viewed as the most disadvantaged ethnic group in America (Barker & McCorry,1976; Farley, 1977, Farley & Hermalin,1972; Havinghurst and Neugarten, 1977). Studies by Bowles and Gintis (1970), Hauser (1976), and Hirchman and Wong (1984) concluded that although education had been a significant intervening factor for minority achievement, education had not increased the mobility rate for blacks. On the other hand, although wide differentials between blacks and whites existed, blacks could experience some degree of upward mobility. Epps (1971), Featherman and Hauser (1976), and Thomas, Alexander, and Eckland (1977) argued that the educational attainments of blacks during the prolific years of the 60s and 70s elevated a family socioeconomic status that enabled them to succeed in America.

Secondly, consistent economic findings were reporting that blacks only made moderate gains during the years (1960-1970) of prosperity. Throughout this period, an economic analysis showed black median income growing from 55 percent to 61 percent of white income. In addition, black incomes of $10,000 or more increased substantially (38%) as federal policies and programs continued to narrow the wide socioeconomic gap between blacks and whites. These moderate gains, however, were later tipped by the iceberg of an inflation that overshawdowed gains made by blacks (Bureau of Census, 1980).

Two years later (1972), the black median income of $6,864 had deflated to 59 percent of the $11,549 median income of white families (Bureau of Census, 1983; Kanfman, 1983). Hill (1978) observed that black

families with an annual income of $15,000 or more decreased from 25 percent in 1972 to 23 percent in 1975. Other unstable economic signals existed with the jobless market near the end of the 70s. As approximately 18 million people experienced some type of unemployment at the decade, growing unemployment rates for black adults and teenagers shadowed upward socioeconomic hopes. The black unemployment rate had reached 14.3 percent, compared to white unemployment rate of 5.1 percent (Bureua of Census, 1983).

These high unemployment rates for blacks generated an increasing number of black poor families. Comparatively, there were more poor black families (28.2 percent) than poor white families (7.0 percent) by 1977 (Bureau of Census, 1983). By the end of the 70s, the number of poor white families (2.2 percent) decreased at a more rapid rate than the rate of blacks (1.4 percent) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1981). Consequently, these economic alarming figures began to cancel any accelerated progress previously made by blacks. It was feared that blacks' socioeconomic status and stability was eroding, because the 1980s looked bleak for minorities and low-income families. Moreover, it was feared that blacks would no longer take the educational ladder for upward mobility.

Perhaps this projected downward economic trend for blacks should have curtailed blacks' aspirations for pursuing postsecondary education, especially at a time when unemployment rates were still soaring, and the value of a college degree was being questioned (Ellis, 1980; Freeman and Holloman, 1975; Richman and Farmer, 1977). Conversely, black college enrollments increased. The high educational aspirations of blacks continued and held steady throught the 70s. For example, the proportion of black high school graduates (18 to 24) who enrolled in college increased from 26 percent in 1970 to 32 percent in 1975. This black percentage rate

was equivalent to that of whites. By 1978 blacks represented 10.4 percent of all full-time college undergraduate students, compared to the 6.8 percent in 1970 (Dept. of Ed). Similarly, by 1979, 7.9 percent of the population with 4 or more college years was black, compared to the 4.5 percent reported in 1970 (Bureau of Census, 1980). In addition, 1982 figures reported that blacks had attained almost the same average number of years of schooling (12.2) as whites (12.6) (Bureau of Census, 1983).

One significant implication of the persistent college enrollment of blacks is that blacks still perceive education to be important. Secondly, blacks still believe that a good education will afford them better opportunities in life (Drake & Cayton, 1970; Johnson, 1966; Newman, 1965; Ogbu, 1974; Weinberg, 1970). However, these beliefs are only essoteric. Proposals to reduce the nation's high deficit is at the expense of reducing and eliminating educational opportunities for some. This concern is one of the top priorities for the 80s.

The fiscal constraints are currently having a harsh impact on minorities and low-income families. Current reports are showing that these groups are the first casualities for limited access to higher education (ACE,Office of Minority,1983; The College Board, 1985). After two decades of emphasis on civil rights and economic equity, the political roles and attitudes are shifting at a time when blacks are socioeconomically trying to "catch up".

Thus far, unfavorable educational patterns of the 80s are emerging for blacks as more reduced federally-funded programs are adopted. In 1982 reports from the American Council on Education (ACE) projected the black enrollment decline would occur throughout the 80s. Several other

reports stated blacks' educational attainments would be affected by financial aid cuts (Black Issues in Higher Ed.,1983; Higher Ed. & National Affairs, 1982). Not only are minorities and low-income students seen not entering college, but they are seen dropping out of the educational pipeline at high school levels as well. For example, the percentage of full-time black undergraduates was comparatively lower in 1980 (10.2) than it was in 1976 (10.3 percent) and 1978 (10.4 percent). In addition, only 6.4 percent of the bachelor's degrees were awarded to blacks in 1980 (ACE,Office of Minority Concerns, 1981; Bureau of Census, 1981). Similar findings showed that while 32 percent of black high school graduates entered college in 1975, the percentage rate dropped to 28 percent by 1981 (Bureau of Census, 1983; Wilson & Melendez, 1985).

According to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (The Chronicle, 1985), changed financial aid patterns have comparatively made a difference with the educational pursuits of minorities. This difference could be comparatively seen between the percentage increase of black high school graduates (29 percent) and college participation rate decline (11 percent) between 1975-1981. The shrinking numbers are even more visible between 1978-1983.

Other recurrent findings are reporting why the status of blacks and low-income students' higher education is eroding. First, statistical figures already show that college students are having to absorb more of their college costs. For the 1982-83 academic year, college freshmen had to absorb two-thirds of their college costs (64%). Loans and work-study covered one-third, and family resources contributed one-third of the cost (American Council on Education, 1984). Although Pell Grants were 13 percent higher than in 1978-79, inflation rose 57 percent during this 82-83

academic year. Concurrently, black family incomes decreased 5.3 percent, and more black families were poor (36 percent) than the previous decade (29 percent) (Black Enterprise, 1985; U.S. Dept. of Ed.,1982,1983). The culminating financial factors were also influential with decreasing percentage numbers (12%) of black low-income students from families with incomes under $12,000 between 1969-1981 (ACE,1984). Wilson (The Chronicle, 1985) recently reported findings from the American Council concluded that poor college students assume half of their college expenses despite the Pell Grant assistance. Therefore, even those black students who attend college were from families who were only able to make a 9 percent contibution, compared to the 12.2 percent contribution by white families (AASCU,1985). Secondly, studies are showing that whites are beginning to use more student aid than in previous years (AASCU, 1985). With these regressional factors, the concern is will college enrollments for minorities and low-income students continue to shrink as tuition costs continue to escalate, deflated purchasing power of student aid programs emerge, and possible withdrawal of state and federal aid program? Perhaps the cited financial barriers will continue to account for the declining small percentage number of black adults who had earned a baccalaureate of higher degree in 1980 (6.4%) and between 1982-83 (5.9%) (Bureau of Census, 1984; U. S. Dept. of Education, 1984).

Such regressing figures and devastating reports have not deterred the plans of Reagan's Administration. Huge chunks from higher education programs will still be sliced. When President Reagan announced the proposed 1985 fiscal budget in 1984, the cuts included slashing 460 million dollars from higher education. 330 million dollars were to be withdrawn from student aid programs. According to Saunders (Higher Ed. & National

Affairs, 1984), Pell Grants would be revised to assist students who could contribute 40 percent of college costs through work or loans before receiving a grant. Supplemental Grants (SEOG) were to be eliminated altogether, and the interest rates on Direct Student Loans (NDSL) would increase from 5 to 8 percent, because federal capital would not be added to the loan. Guaranteed Student Loans (GSL) were to be revised for only the needy; while State Student Incentive Grants would possibly be eliminated. Documented sources were already showing that financial aid has shifted to more student-aid loans and fewer grants (The College Board, 1984). From 1980-1984, grants decreased from 55 percent to 45 percent; while loans increased from 40 percent to 53 percent. Wilson & Melendez (1985) noted that with limited economic resources, minorities do not shift from grants to loans as do white students; they simply do not go to school.

The proclaimation for "Education Excellence" appears feeble to black families who are financially unable to send their children to college. The College Board recently reported the erosion of blacks' educational gains could reverse the equality movement. The following assertion was made:

> Excellence for black students will not become a reality unless and until they receive enriched curricular opportunities in elementary and secondary schools, sufficient financial assistance to pursue higher education opportunities, ... (Higher Ed. and National Affairs, 1985).

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities has concluded:

> ... lower-income families, among whom are a disproportionate share of minority students, lost resources during the period (1978-83) both in the form of family income and in student aid dollars. They became less likely to send their children to college (The (The Chronicle, 1985).

The American Council on Education of the Office of Minority Concerns has viewed the diminishing black participation rates in higher education by making the following assertion:

> The prospect of a population that may be 35 percent minority by 2020, coupled with the alarming statistics for minority educational attainment, makes it clear that we are headed for a crisis the consequences of which can be devastating to the country's continued prosperity and well being (Higher Ed. & National Affairs, 1983).

Finally, Carl Rowan, a syndicate journalist, recently reported on why black Americans can't afford schizophrenia. In his analysis of the socio-economic status of blacks during the last three Presidents' Administration, Rowan (1985) concluded the following:

> However limited economic resources are in black America, we must sacrifice to make education--trained intelligence--available to more black youngsters. The government that giveth food stamps away, but it can never deprive a person of learning acquired, or of the power that comes with it ("Black Americans Can't Afford Schizophrenia", The Chattanooga Times, January 1, 1985).

In conclusion, blacks have a legitimate right to be concerned with whether or not current and future proposed financial aid cuts will continue to alter black high school students' decision to pursue postsecondary education? Repleted literature findings from Cramer et al. (1966); Gurin and Katz (1966); Lorenz (1972); Ogbu (1974); Portes and Wilson (1976); Rodman and Voydanoff (1968); and Weinberg (1968,1970) have suggested that blacks have high educational aspirations. W. E. B DuBois (1969) did contend: "We shall hardly induce black man to believe that if their stomachs are full, it matters little about their brains." So is this to say that black teenagers will continue to value and pursue higher education despite the financial paralysis?

RATIONALE FOR STUDY

The college participation rate for blacks appears to be diminishing due to rising tuition costs and federal aid reductions. Statistical reports have found that an increasing percentage number of black high school graduates had plans not to attend college by the mid-70s (17.8 percent) (U. S. Dept. of Ed.,1979). Phi Delta Kappan (1978) reported that 52 percent of the black parents felt their children did not have the same educational opportunities as white children. Nevertheless, studies from Blake (1960); Cosby (1971); Geisel (1962); Goff (1950); Nam, Rhodes, and Herriott (1966); Newman, (1965); Wylie and Hutchin (1967) have shown that black high school graduates have high educational aspirations. Conversely, however, a recent study by Valez (1985) concluded that minorities had no plans to attend college after high school graduation.

Therefore, in light of these literature findings, the primary purpose of this study was to examine postsecondary plans of black high school students attending two different high schools. The secondary purpose was to assess the black students' attitudes toward education.

The study addressed five research questions related to having post-secondary plans, financing college education, and valuing education:

1. What is the percentage number of black high school students planning to attend college after graduation?
2. Do postsecondary plans differ significantly between the two groups attending different high schools?
3. Are finances a major factor for black students not attending college?
4. How will students who attend college meet educational expenses?
5. How do the black students view the value of education? Is there a significant difference between the two groups?

Chi-square measurements were utilized to analyze the data and to determine significant differences between the two groups. The level of significane was set at .05.

DATA METHOD AND SOURCE

A closed questionnaire with limited responses and an "other" category was used to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of 30 items with 10 attitudinal questions on a 10-point scale.

During Spring, 1985, data were collected from two urban predominant black schools located in a metropolitan city. One of the schools was classified as an honor school in which 62 black high school students were surveyed from English and math classes. This sampled group primarily consisted of graduating seniors (45%). The second sampled group consisted of 59 black students who were primarily sophomores (66%) from English and math classes. More females (N=70) than males (N=51) were included in the study. Seventy percent of the groups were between the ages of 16 and 17. The subjects' G.P.A's varied between groups, but not statistically significant ($p > .20$).

Similar family background data that did not differ statistically significant were found between the two sampled groups. For example, the majority of the surveyed black students came from families with five or six household members which included three or four children. A small percentage of the families had children in college (29%) or children who had completed college (15%). The parents' highest level of education was high school,but family incomes varied significantly between the two groups. Family incomes tended to be higher ($20,000-50,000/over) for students attending the honor school than the other group whose incomes

fell comparatively below $5,000 (23%) and between $5,000-9,999 (29%), $X^2(7) = 25.87$, $p < .001$. (See Table I for a comparative view.)

RESULTS

Seventy-one percent of the subjects did not have a job while going to school; therefore, they had time to participate in various extracurricular activities that differed statistically significant between groups, $X^2(6) = 35.94$, $p < .001$. The first group showed more participation in honor society and student council, compared to the second group who participated more in the choir and sports. Academically, both groups felt they did not make the grades they could've made in classes, although the classes were enjoyable.

After high school, the majority of the black students said they plan to attend college ($X^2(5) = 6.85$, $p > .20$), because both parents have influenced this decision, $X^2(4) = .99$, $p > .91$. In addition, the subjects knew the career they wanted after high school, ($X^2(1) = 3.25$, $p > .10$), and in 5 years, $X^2(2) = 3.99$, $p > .10$. The primary reasons for wanting to attend college were to have job opportunities (27 percent), gain an education (18 percent), earn money (16 percent), meet new people (15 percent), and become more cultural (8 percent). There were statistical significant differences between the two groups, perhaps due to the first group wanting to get away from home and parents' wishes ($X^2(9) = 19.91$, $p < .001$). Of those students not planning to attend college, the primary reasons were due to getting a job (46 percent) and financially unprepared (16 percent). There was a significant difference between the groups, $X^2(8) = 39.86$, $p < .001$. (See Tables II and III for a comparative view between the two groups.)

TABLE I

Economical and Educational Levels of Families of Black High School Students

Levels	Total N	Total %	School A N	School A %	School B N	School B %
Income						
Under $5,000	21	18	6	11	15	23
5,000- 9,999	26	22	8	15	18	29
10,000-14,000	16	14	8	15	8	13
15,000-19,000	23	20	6	11	17	27
20,000-19,000	9	8	7	13	2	3
25,000-24,000	9	8	6	11	3	5
35,000/over	13	10	13	24	0	0
Mother's Highest Education						
Elem./Jr. High	3	3	2	3	1	2
High School	57	50	27	42	30	63
Some College	30	27	22	34	8	15
Master Grad.	17	15	10	16	7	14
Doctorate Grad.	6	5	3	5	3	6
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Father's Highest Education						
Elem./Jr. High	10	9	2	3	8	14
High School	54	47	24	41	30	53
Some College	28	24	17	29	11	18
Master Grad.	18	16	12	20	6	11
Doctorate Grad.	5	3	3	5	2	4
Other	1	1	1	2	0	0

TABLE II

Postsecondary Plans of Black High School Students and Influential Factors of These Plans

		Postsecondary Plans					Influential Factors				
		College	Marriage	Work	Undecided		Parents	Sis. Bro.	Friend	Teacher Principal
School	Total N	Percentage distribution				Total N	Percentage distribution			
A	67	57	7	29	7	82	75	4	12	9
B	58	52	2	27	19	63	72	6	11	11
Chi-Sq		$X^2(5)= 6.85$* p > .233					$X^2(4)= .995$** p > .912			

* An "I Don't Know" and "Other" category was included.
** Mother and Father were separate items.

TABLE III

Why Black High School Students Will and Won't Attend College

	School A		School B	
Reason(s)	N	%	N	%
For Attending				
Job Opp.	53	28	37	26
Gen. Educ.	32	17	28	20
Leave Home	15	8	6	4
Parent(s) Wishes	13	7	8	6
Earn Money	23	12	25	17
Meet People	28	15	20	14
No Jobs	8	4	0	0
Cultural	14	7	12	9
Nothing Better	4	2	0	0
Don't Know	0	0	5	4
Not Attending				
No Interest	4	11	1	1
Marriage	0	0	1	1
Work	6	16	40	63
Enjoyment	4	11	12	19
Unprepared Financially	10	26	5	8
Unprepared Academically	7	18	0	0
Parent(s) Opposed	0	0	0	0
Have Family	1	1	0	0
Don't Know	6	16	4	6

Of those planning to attend college, the majority (68 percent) planned to attend a four-year institution as full-time students (84 percent). Although there was not a statistical significant difference between the groups regarding college selection based on the cost of tuition, 53 percent said tuition costs would matter, $X^2(2) = 10.52$, $p < .005$. Educational expenses would be primarily financed by working. The main sources for financing educational expenses would be parents (28 percent), work (24 percent), Pell Grant (18 percent), loans (11 percent), and SEOG (10 percent), $x^2(6) = 10.85$, $p > .10$. (See Table IV.) Student-aid reductions would not prevent the subjects from attending college ($X^2(2) = 2.72$, $p > .20$), for they plan to complete their college plans, $X^2(2) = 3.36$, $p > .15$.

Statistically, there was not a significant difference between groups about educational aspirations. The majority (44 percent) of the respondents aspired for a master degree; however, more blacks attending an honor school had higher aspirations (doctorate, medical and law degrees), compared to the aspirations of the second group, $X^2(5) = 8.41$, $p > .10$.

Some of the findings from the attitudinal valued scale of education revealed statistical significant differences between the two groups. As far as high schools preparing them for a future career, the first sampled group had higher ratings than the second group, $X^2(9) = 17.12$, $p < .05$. Similarly, the first group felt more academically prepared for college ($p < .001$) and able to pass a college admission test ($p < .008$) than the other group. However, both groups felt they could succeed in college if they were to attend ($p > .10$).

TABLE IV

How Black Students Plan to Pay College Expenses

School	Total N	Self-Help and Dependent Help			Financial Aid		
		Working % N	Savings % N	Parent(s) % N	Pell Grant % N	SEOG % N	Loan % N
A	111	23	29	10	22	8	8
B	94	27	28	3	13	13	16
All Students	205	24	9	28	18	10	11

The honor school group felt that most high school students do not value an education ($p < .008$). Both groups, however, felt that students tend to value school activities more than academic classes ($p > .20$). The honor school group was more inclined to believe that college would be valuable within the next five years ($p < .009$) and opportunities would exist for them after graduation ($p < .001$) than the second group. Yet, both groups' attitude was that a person doesn't need postsecondary education to feel secure in life ($p > .50$). (See Table V.)

Other findings from the study reflected that the respondents are familiar with various financial aid programs for college. If they were to attend college, their parents would be unable to pay all the costs without financial assistance, $X^2(9) = 2.99$, $p > .90$. The general attitude was that the government should financially assist students who want to attend college, but cannot financially afford to go, $X^2(7) = 6.75$, $p > .40$.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings from the study have suggested several conclusions. If black students come from supported family backgrounds, regardless of parents' highest level of education and occupation, they can aspire to high educational attainments. Therefore, parental involvement, assistance, and support are important and influential in black students' lives.

Overall, the black students do value education. Consequently, they should be encouraged to pursue postsecondary education despite proposed

TABLE V

Black High School Students' Attitudinal Position on Education*

Attitudes	Low N	Medium N	High N
Going to college is valuable	12	5	86
Need for college educ. for security	35	45	18
Educ. completion will lead to job opportunities	15	17	67
High school preparation for college	18	28	56
Ability to pass college admission test	9	36	59
Ability to succeed in college	8	16	78
General view of high school students' value of an educ.	26	44	27
General view of high school students' value of school activities more than academic classes	24	24	50

*Continuum of responses were numerically summated into the three categories.

financial aid reductions and eliminations. The likelikhood is that educational aspirations will remain low for those black students who decided not to attend college, because their parents are financially unable to support them. Consequently, it is frivolous for the Reagan Administration to advocate excellence in education on one hand, while recurrently proposing drastic cuts in student aid programs that would enable minorities and low-income students to attain excellence with postsecondary education.

Another implication from the study is that learning environments are important and needed for black students. If black students are placed in a college-bound academic setting, they have an opportunity to become educationally orientated to attend college and aspire for high educational attainments.

The study also concluded that limited access to education also entails restricting low-income and minority students' college choices. If financial aid programs are reduced, minorities become limited to where they can attend college, because tuition costs are too high at some institutions. The black students could be academically prepared; yet, financially unable to attend the college of their choice. Therefore, educational aspirations would remain low. Minority and low-income students should not be deprived from attaining educational goals due to their families inability to have such financial resources as savings and high family incomes. In addition, the academically-prepared black students who are planning to work, because they cannot afford to attend college, will face unemployment problems due to the high black youth unemployment rates. In conclusion, limited access to education for blacks, other minorities, and low-income students is not only restricting, but determining "who will be educated" and "where they will be educated" as well.

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